

**No. R-513. House concurrent resolution congratulating Saint Peter Roman Catholic Parish in Rutland on its solar energy leadership.**

(H.C.R.359)

Offered by: Representative Russell of Rutland City

Whereas, Saint Peter Parish in Rutland is in the forefront among Vermont religious organizations in the field of energy efficiency, and

Whereas, Saint Peter's property includes both Saint Peter Roman Catholic Church and the friary next door that serves as the pastor's residence and houses administrative offices, and

Whereas, parish finance committee member Joseph Barbagallo, a retired Central Vermont Public Service systems coordinator, and his fellow committee members, have garnered the support of Saint Peter's pastor, Father Thomas Houle, and Vermont Bishop Christopher Coyne for the church to proceed with innovative energy efficiency projects, and

Whereas, Saint Peter's first energy investment campaign improved insulation in the friary, lowering heating costs and also reducing lighting expenses, in both the friary and the church, through the installation of LED light bulbs, and

Whereas, the parish then initiated a more ambitious endeavor, making the friary 100 percent solar-powered for its electrical needs, and

Whereas, the \$46,000.00 cost for the 30-panel solar array was financed in part with grants of \$20,000.00 from Green Mountain Power and \$6,000.00 from Same Sun of Vermont, which were critical for the project's affordability, and

Whereas, parishioners donated \$9,000.00 during the first two weeks of a fundraising drive and are working steadily to raise the balance of the funds, and

Whereas, because the friary is an historic building, the roof was unavailable as a location for the solar array, and the parish worked as a good neighbor, modifying its original siting plan and adding fencing to minimize the public's view of the solar panels, and

Whereas, this now operating solar project includes an approximately seven-year payback period, meaning that the parish will gain over 20 years of free electricity for the friary and save \$2,500.00–\$3,000.00 in annual utility expenses, and

Whereas, the parish can serve as a model for other religious institutions considering solar energy initiatives, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates Saint Peter Roman Catholic Parish in Rutland on its solar energy leadership, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Saint Peter Roman Catholic Parish.